

Biographical Description for The HistoryMakers® Video Oral History with Dr. Louis W. Sullivan

PERSON

Sullivan, Louis Wade, 1933-

Alternative Names: Dr. Louis W. Sullivan; Louis Wade Sullivan;

Life Dates: November 3, 1933-

Place of Birth: Atlanta, Georgia, USA

Residence: Atlanta, GA

Work: Atlanta, GA

Occupations: ; College President; Federal Cabinet Appointee

Biographical Note

Federal cabinet appointee and college president Dr. Louis Wade Sullivan was born on November 3, 1933 in Atlanta, Georgia to Lubirda Priester and Walter Wade Sullivan. After graduating from Booker T. Washington High School, Sullivan received his B.S. degree in biology from Morehouse College in 1954.

He went on to receive his M.D. degree from Boston University School of Medicine in 1958, completing his residency at New York Hospital-Cornell Medical Center.

In 1960, Sullivan began a pathology fellowship at Massachusetts General Hospital in Boston, before working at Boston City Hospital and studying hematology at the Thorndike Laboratory. He was hired as co-director of hematology at Boston University Medical Center in 1966; and, in 1967, he founded the Boston University Hematology Service. In 1975, Morehouse College Medical Education Program was founded and Sullivan returned to Atlanta to serve as its first dean, teaching biology and medicine and founding the Medical Education Program at Morehouse College. The Morehouse School of Medicine became independent from Morehouse College in 1981, with Sullivan as its president and dean. In 1988, President George H.W. Bush appointed Sullivan to serve as the U.S. Secretary of Health and Human Services. He returned to Morehouse School of Medicine in 1993 as president, retiring from the position in 2002.

In 1976, Sullivan helped found the Association of Minority Health Professions Schools to promote a national minority health agenda; and, in 1999, he hosted the public television show “Frontiers of Medicine.” In 2003, he was appointed by President George W. Bush to chair the White House initiative on historically black colleges and universities advisory committee. He also served as chairman of the National Health Museum and on the boards of United Therapeutics, Emergent BioSolutions, General Motors, Cigna, and Equifax.

Sullivan has received more than sixty honorary degrees, including an honorary M.D. degree from the University of Pretoria in South Africa. He received the Jimmy and Rosalynn Carter Award for Humanitarian Contributions to the Health of Humankind from the National Foundation for Infectious Diseases in 2008

and his autobiography received the NAACP Image Award for Literature in 2015.

Sullivan and his wife, E. Ginger Williamson Sullivan, have three children: Paul, Shanta, and Halsted.

Dr. Louis Wade Sullivan was interviewed by The HistoryMakers on March 21, 2002 and August 17, 2019.

Related Entries

Boston University School of Medicine [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

M.D.

Booker T. Washington High School [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

HS diploma

Morehouse College [STUDENTOF]
[from ? to ?]

B.S.

Thorndike Memorial Laboratory Boston City Hospital [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1960 to 1963]

Research Fellow

New Jersey College of Medicine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1964 to 1966]

Assistant professor

Boston University Medical Center [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1966 to 1975]

Co-director of Hematology

Morehouse College School of Medicine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1975 to 1989]

President, Dean, Professor

United States Department of Health and Human Services [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1989 to 1993]

Secretary

Morehouse College School of Medicine [EMPLOYEEOF]
[from 1993 to 2002]

President, Dean, Professor

Association of Minority Health Professions Schools (AMHPS) [MEMBEROF]
[from 1976 to ?]

Founder

White House Initiative on Historically Black Colleges and Universities [MEMBEROF]
[from 2003 to 2009]

Advisory Committee Member

National Health Museum [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Chair

United Therapeutics [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Sullivan Alliance to Transform the Health Professions [MEMBEROF]
[from ? to ?]

Chair

President's Commission on HIV and AIDS [MEMBEROF]
[from 2001 to 2006]

Co-Chair

Grady Hospital Corporation [MEMBEROF]

[from 2008 to ?]

Board and Trustee Member

National Association of Land Grant Colleges and Universities [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Joint Committee on Health Policy of the Association of American Universities [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Member

Medical Education for South African Blacks (MESAB) [MEMBEROF]

[from 1985 to ?]

Founder

Emergent BioSolutions [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

General Motors [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Cigna [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

Equifax, Inc. [MEMBEROF]

[from ? to ?]

Board Member

